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Quite often the reader finds himself wishing the author had stated some matter exactly rather than vaguely, e. g., germination of the oospores of *Plasmopara viticola*. Prillieux is probably right in maintaining that Viala has not satisfactorily determined the aetiology of Brunni-sure and the California vine disease, the microscopic appearances ascribed to a Plasmodiophora being quite as likely due to the effect of strong reagents on the protoplasm of the cell. Some of the figures in this book are excellent, others are very poor. There is no index.

It is to be hoped that Dr. Sorauer will now bring out another edition of his *Handbuch der Pflanzenkrankheiten*, or at least of the 2nd volume on parasitic plants which was issued in 1886 and needs revision badly. All of these books are useful to American students, and should certainly find place on the book shelves of every vegetable pathologist. It would seem that the time is not ripe for the appearance of standard American works on this subject. There is, however, great activity in the study of plant diseases in this country, and we may look for a crop of them within the next decade.—ERWIN F. SMITH.

The Iowa University Bahama Expedition.¹—The history of an educational and scientific experiment is given Mr. C. C. Nutting in this octavo volume of 251 pages. It is published as Bulletins Nos. 1 and 2, Vol. III, of the laboratories of Natural History of the Iowa State University. The zoology of the region visited is treated of in a general way with a view to giving an idea of the facies of the collections from the several localities. The marine and land invertebrata are treated of quite fully, but none of the vertebrates receive much attention excepting the birds. The beauties of marine life are graphically described, and a considerable number of illustrations add to the general excellence of the get up of the book. An appendix gives a list of commissary stores actually used during the expedition.

Mr. Nutting, in summing up the results of the expedition, draws attention to the fact that this enterprise demonstrates the practicability of accomplishing such results at a cost which is merely nominal.

The Shrews of North America.²—The tenth number in the North American Fauna series published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, contains three papers on the Shrews: A revision of the genera *Blarina* and *Notiosorex* by Dr. C. H. Merriam, a synopsis of the

¹ The Bahama Expedition. Bulls. Nos. 1 and 2, Vol. III, Laboratories Nat. Hist. Iowa State Univ. Iowa City 1895.

² North American Fauna No. 10, Washington, 1895. Comprising papers by C. Hart Merriam and G. S. Miller, Jr.

genus *Sorex* by the same author, and a discussion of the long-tailed Shrews of eastern United States by G. S. Miller, Jr.

In regard to the short tailed Shrews of the genus *Blarina*, Dr. Merriam states that up to the present time 8 valid species have been described from the United States, 2 from Mexico, 1 from Guatemala and 2 from Costa Rica. Twelve new forms are here added, 3 from the eastern United States and 9 from Mexico, making 20 members of the genus now known. The type localities are given and the geographical distribution. A complete synonymy accompanies each description.

Dr. Merriam's second paper is a synopsis of the species of *Sorex*, and is based on an examination of 1200 specimens. In this material were found 20 new forms which are here described. In this paper, as in the first, careful attention has been given to the synonymy.

The only genera of *Soricidae* included in this monograph by Dr. Merriam are *Blarina* Gray, *Notiosorex* Baird and *Sorex* Linn.

Mr. Miller's contribution is a study of the long tailed Shrews of the eastern United States. The author gives in detail the history of each species. The descriptions include the type locality, geographic distribution, and detailed information under the head of general remarks.

Figures of all the species described are given on 12 page plates, and they are of excellent quality. The monographs are the most important contributions to the subject that have been made, and are indispensable to the student of N. American mammalia.

Iowa Geological Survey, Vol. III.³—A quarto volume containing the several reports of the geological corps, with accompanying papers of the geology of special formations and areas. The work in the southwest half of the State was done under the immediate supervision of Dr. Keyes who contributes three papers on the geology of that section, and also one on the glacial scorings in Iowa. Mr. Calvin discusses the composition and origin of the Iowa Chalk. The Paleozoic strata in the northeastern part of the State, and certain Carboniferous and Devonian outliers in the eastern region are reported upon by Mr. Norton. The Cretaceous deposits of the Sioux Valley by Mr. Bain and certain buried River Channels by Mr. Gordon. The illustrations include 37 plates, a number of maps, and 34 figures in the text. We are glad to learn that the survey is in a prosperous condition, and hope that its work will be appreciated at its true worth by the State authorities.

³ Iowa Geological Survey, Vol. III. Second Annual Report, 1895, with accompanying papers. Des Moines, 1895.